



DECREE
of Appointment

With the approval of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV of the release of the document “Pathways for the Implementation Phase of the Synod,” and at the request of and in coordination with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (see the attached appendix), as we develop and integrate synodality in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, I hereby appoint

THE ARCHDIOCESAN SYNODAL TEAM

The Archdiocesan Synodal Team will consist of the **Very Reverend Michael Hawken**, Vicar General, **Helen Osman**, Coordinator, **Denise Mills**, and **Deacon Jim Mullin**.

The Archdiocesan Synodal Team will assist me as the Diocesan Bishop in prayerfully studying the Final Document which Pope Francis received and ordered published from the 2024 Synod of Bishops, in order to further integrate the synodal dimension of ecclesial life into the Archdiocese.

This decree is to be published on the website of the Archdiocese and in the next edition of The Leaven.

Given at the Chancery in Kansas City, KS on the 30th day of September in the year of Our Lord 2025.



The Most Reverend Shawn McKnight, S.Th.D.
Archbishop of Kansas City in Kansas



Rev. Anthony J. Saili, J.C.L.
Vice-Chancellor



United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

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September 2, 2025

Re: Implementation Phase of the 2021-2024 Synod

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I am happy to share an update with you regarding the Implementation Phase of the 2021-2024 Synod, *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*.

On Monday, July 7, 2025, with the approval of Pope Leo XIV, the General Secretariat for the Synod released "[Pathways for the Implementation Phase of the Synod](#)." This 20-page resource offers an overview of the next three years leading up to the 2028 Ecclesial Assembly in Rome. The document outlines the appointment of a Diocesan Synodal Team in each diocese and offers descriptive suggestions concerning its composition. For the work of the implementation phase, the Diocesan Synodal Team members should have intimate familiarity with the [Final Document](#) from the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod.

If you have not already done so, please appoint your Diocesan Synodal Team, and its coordinator. The coordinator will ensure that your Synodal Team is in regular communication with the USCCB Synod Office. Your diocesan coordinator can register with the USCCB at the following link: <https://airtable.com/apppe1YzK2zODgyUA/shr1FYfmYiNy153wH>

After you have appointed your synodal team, it is important that the diocesan bishop and the synod team prayerfully study the [Final Document](#) from the 2024 Synod of Bishops, which Pope Francis received and ordered published. Taking the time to study the document now, in conjunction with other relevant synodal documents, especially your prior diocesan synodal syntheses, will enhance the synodal work of your Team as it works with you to further integrate the synodal dimension of ecclesial life.

More information regarding guidance from the USCCB on these matters will be forthcoming. However, as we begin to study the [Final Document](#) it is important to remember that we are not being asked to "reinvent the wheel." It seems perfectly reasonable to begin this phase with an evaluation of synodal activities that are already in place in your diocese, and with the help of the Diocesan Synodal Team, to think of ways to deepen and expand their reach. These initial discernments might well look at those diocesan priorities already in place and in operation from the perspective of encouraging greater participation in the aspects of the mission these priorities highlight.

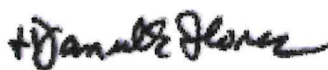
Likewise, as you will note in the [Pathways document](#), the Diocesan Synodal Team is not designed to replace current structures of consultation, discernment, and decision making, but rather to facilitate the orderly integration of the kinds of synodal dimensions discussed in the [Final Document](#). Learning from the [Final Document](#) in synodal fashion can help us better integrate synodality into the life of the local Church, in ways that are appropriate for the good of the local community. At all times, the bishop guides the participative discernment and decides about how best local implementation proceeds.

Dr. Julia McStravog, Senior Advisor for the Synod, and the USCCB Synod Team remain at your service for questions, clarifications, or any other need that may arise as we continue the synodal path. You can reach out to her at synod@usccb.org.

I am grateful for the generosity of spirit with which you engage the [Implementation Phase](#) of the recent Synod, and pray it bears much fruit.

Yours in Christ,

Your Brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel E. Flores".

Bishop Daniel E. Flores
Bishop, Diocese of Brownsville